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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OF PORTO RICO
Office of the Commissioner
San Juan

Circular Letter #14.

September 7, 1910.

To the Supervising Principals:-

Please call the attention of the teachers of your district to the following communication which I have received from the Acting Attorney General.

"The Commissioner of Education,
San Juan.

Sir:

I have the honor to call your attention to Section 14 of the Civil Service Act of March 14, 1907, which Section reads as follows:

'SECTION 14: That no person in the Civil Service of Porto Rico shall be under obligations to contribute to a political fund or to render a political service, or to be removed or otherwise prejudiced for refusing to do so. Any person soliciting political contributions from public officers or employees shall be subject to a penalty of not exceeding five hundred dollars or to imprisonment not exceeding six months, or both."

The reason I am inviting your attention to this law is because the Secretary of one of the School Boards of the Island has recently been convicted of a violation of this Section, and this Department is informed that members of other school-boards of the Island have committed similar violations. Believing it possible that it is through ignorance of the law that these acts are being committed, I am taking the liberty

of suggesting that you call the attention of the various school-boards to the section referred to, informing them that it is the intention of the Department of Justice to prosecute all persons who violate the law in this regard whenever evidence is obtained against them.

Respectfully,

(Signed) HENRY L. LYONS,

Acting Attorney-General."

Please make it plain to the teachers that they are at perfect liberty to make any voluntary contribution that they see fit for political purposes. The Department believes that such contributions are right and proper. The Department is, however, anxious to co-operate with the Department of Justice in prosecuting any violators of Section 14 of the Civil Service Law, cited above and will, so far as it is in its power, protect any teacher refusing to make involuntary contributions.

Respectfully,

(Signed) Edwin G. Dexter
Commissioner of Education

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